

Delegate Beachley is an educator in the State who has served abroad for the State Department. Dr. Pullen is the former State Superintendent of Schools, and some of us who are lawyers are not fooled by the attempt to misdefine equal educational opportunity. I speak, when I speak as a former teacher and a former educator for all of the children in this State who have not had equal educational opportunity—

THE CHAIRMAN: You have one-half minute, Delegate Mitchell.

DELEGATE MITCHELL: —because they had the misfortune to be born in rural areas where there were no opportunities for handicapped children, where there were no vocational training schools in the little towns and the like; and there is a tremendous need and a responsibility and duty on the part of this State, and the states of this nation to provide every child with an equal educational opportunity.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Johnson, do you desire to speak in favor of the amendment?

DELEGATE JOHNSON: I do, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: You may proceed.

DELEGATE JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, and ladies and gentlemen of the Committee of the Whole, I want to assure Delegate Wheatley that when I vote for this amendment, I am not voting against equal opportunity in education for all, but I am voting against what I consider to be a pie-in-the-sky platitude, that at best is unenforceable and at worst dangerous and misleading.

I do not believe that the amendment is any help. I think that it is virtually the same. In discussing the amendment "promote", we took a consensus on this side of the room as to what the word "promote" means; and we determined that it means to be "provided by law."

Now, I did not believe that until I looked at WEBSTER'S SEVENTH NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY, and the most applicable definition of the word "promote" is, "to help bring into being"; so I suggest that the consensus that we reached is correct, that it does in fact mean to be provided by law.

The Majority Report states clearly, I think, its intention, and I quote from that report: "The Committee intends by this section to endorse the right of every individual to attain the highest fulfillment of his individual educational capacity.

Ladies and gentlemen, we cannot so guarantee in this constitution. It is impossible and impractical to so guarantee, and I urge you to adopt the amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Kirkland, do you desire to speak in opposition to the amendment.

DELEGATE KIRKLAND: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do. I think I have a few things to clear up before, however, with Delegate Lord. First and foremost, when he was making his report, he referred to an article and a statement that I made in the article. At that time, I would agree that that was exactly what I wanted it to mean, Delegate Lord. However, after further Committee meetings, I modified and so therefore I went with the qualified statement of the majority. That was done after the report and the article in the newspaper that you read from.

I think that many of you should pay heed to the statement by Dr. Pullen. I think it was the best statement, based on this particular article. Certainly I believe that education is a basic right, a basic right that we want to protect; and all I can say to you, Delegate Johnson, is that I see nothing wrong with helping to bring something about for people who do not have the opportunities that maybe you and I had.

I oppose the amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question? Delegate B. Miller.

DELEGATE B. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, fellow delegates, I hope you will bear with me. Those of us who were laymen bore with you all yesterday afternoon, all this morning.

To some of us the question of equal opportunity in education is very important. I may not have a lawyer's definition of what equal opportunity in education is, but fellow delegates, I can tell you that I know what unequal opportunity in education is, and I need no lawyer to come and tell me what unequal education is.

I know that in Montgomery County, rich as it is, there are many unequal education opportunities; and I think that the 5,000 families in Montgomery County who live below the poverty level know what unequal opportunity for education is; when no special teacher reaches the corners of our counties, when the classes are larger, when the facilities are poorer, when the libraries do not have books, this is unequal educational opportunity and I do not think that